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MACHINE GUN COMMANDERS' MEMORY CARD

for

Platoon Commanders,
Platoon Serjeants,
Section Commanders
and Section Corporals

9th EDITION

Revised to Date

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DUTIES OF A PLATOON COMMANDER IN THE ATTACK.

DIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Give information as to role of Pl., and the best way for its advance.
2. Tell Pl. Sjt. of his own movements as far as possible.

Either—

3. Moves ahead of Pl. (accompanied by orderly if possible), keeping closest possible touch with infantry he is supporting with a view to engaging targets, detailing line of advance for Pl. through successive probable fire positions, and ensuring that it does not get involved in minor opposition.

Or—

4. Goes ahead to reconnoitre given area, giving a covered line of advance and a rendezvous to Pl. Sjt.

On Decision to Occupy Position.

5. Finds out position of O.T., nature and extent of target.
6. Decides kind of fire. (Direct if possible.)
7. Decides number of guns and amount of S.A.A.
8. Reconnoitres for Pl. area with no immed. overhead problem.
9. Decides :—
 - (a) Areas and positions in readiness for each section.
 - (b) Arrangements for local protection.
 - (c) Arcs of fire (if required) and position of Pl. H.Q.

10. Returns to Pl.; signals for all N.C.O.s., and :—

- (a) Gives situation briefly.
- (b) Orders Pl. Sjt., Pl. H.Q., S.Cs, orderlies and R.Ts. forward to a central rendezvous.
- (c) Details to S. Cpls. positions in readiness for each section, routes to them and amount of S.A.A. required forward and position for limbers after unloading.

11. Goes to central rendezvous and gives :—

To Pl. Sjt. and S.Cs. :—

- (a) Information, enemy and O.T. (b) Intention.
- (c) Method. (1st target and/or arcs of fire, section areas, positions in readiness. That it is safe to fire. When fire is to be opened. Rates of fire. Arrangements for local protection. Position of Pl. H.Q.)

To Pl. Sjt. :—The duties he is to carry out.

To Observer :—

- (a) 1st target and arcs of fire.
- (b) Orders for watching and locating enemy and O.T.

To Scouts :—Orders for local protection.

12. Organizes Pl. H.Q. and reports to Coy. H.Q.

In Action.

13. Is responsible for :—

- (a) Watching progress of battle.
- (b) Sending necessary F.D.Os.
- (c) Forward reconnaissance.
- (d) Replacement of S.A.A.
- (e) Reporting as necessary.

INDIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Same as for direct fire
2. Same.
3. Same.
4. Same.

On Decision to Occupy Position.

5. Same.
6. Decides indirect fire is necessary.
7. Reconnoitres and decides :—
 - (a) O.P., gun line, frontage.
 - (b) Arrangements for local protection.
 - (c) Method (Director or Post), and if necessary pivot gun.
 - (d) Position of Pl. H.Q. (Near O.P.)
 - (e) Position in readiness for Pl. and amount of S.A.A.
8. Sends orderly with orders or goes himself back to Pl., signals for all N.C.O.s., and gives the following verbal orders :—
 - (a) Situation briefly and line of advance.
 - (b) Method of indirect fire.
 - (c) To Pl. Sjt. to go with Pl. H.Q., one R.T. and instruments to Pl. area.
 - (d) To Senior S.C. to move Pl. to position in readiness.
 - (e) To Senior S. Cpl. as to covered position for limbers.
 - (f) Amount of S.A.A.
9. Returns to Pl. area and gives information and the following orders :—
 - To R.T. :—
 - (a) 1st target.
 - (b) Other points to range on.
 - To Observer :—
 - (a) 1st target and arcs of fire.
 - (b) Orders for watching and locating enemy and O.T.
 - To Scouts :—Orders for local protection.
 - To Pl. Sjt. :—
 - (a) Full information.
 - (b) O.P. Gun line and frontage, and pivot gun if necessary.
 - (c) Position of Pl. H.Q.
 - (d) The duties he is to carry out.

10. Establishes an O.P. and proceeds with calculations for engaging the target.

In Action.

11. Is responsible for —

- (a) Controlling fire of his Pl.
- (b) Watching progress of battle.
- (c) Sending necessary F.D.Os.
- (d) Forward reconnaissance.
- (e) Replacement of S.A.A.
- (f) Reporting as necessary.
- (g) Solving safety problems.

DUTIES OF A PLATOON SERJEANT IN THE ATTACK.

DIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Moves Pl. along line of advance as detailed by Pl. C. either
 - (a) by bounds from fire position to fire position or
 - (b) direct to rendezvous.
2. During move and at rendezvous is responsible for :—
 - (a) Knowing movements of and watching signals from Pl. C.
 - (b) Local protection.
 - (c) Use of ground.
 - (d) Formation of Pl. H.Q.
 - (e) Movement and position of limbers.
 - (f) Action in case of surprise.
3. If necessary to move limbers by another route, details N.C.O. to accompany them with orders as to :—
 - (a) Route.
 - (b) Time to start.
 - (c) Place of movement.
 - (d) Where to rejoin Pl. (pointed out if possible).

(When Pl. C. signals for all N.C.O.s., receives situation briefly, and is sent forward to a central rendezvous with Pl. H.Q., S.Cs. orderlies, and R.T.s.).
4. Meets Pl. C. at this position and receives in detail :—
 - (a) Information, intention and method.
 - (b) Any special duties he is to carry out.

Occupation.

5. Acts as 2nd-in-command of Pl., and carries out the special duties.

In Action.

6. Acts as 2nd-in-command to Pl. H.Q., and may be required to perform any of the following duties :—
 - (a) Watching progress of the battle.
 - (b) Sending necessary F.D.Os.
 - (c) Forward reconnaissance.
 - (d) Replacement of S.A.A.
 - (e) Reporting as necessary.

INDIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Same as direct fire.
2. Same.
3. Same.

(When Pl. C. signals for all N.C.O.s., receives situation briefly, line of advance, method of indirect fire, S.A.A. required, instructions to move with Pl. H.Q. and one R.T. and instruments to the area near the position.)

Occupation.

4. Meets Pl. C. in Pl. area and receives full information.
5. Having taken forward the necessary instruments, calls up S.Cs., points out gun line and position of pivot gun (if any).
6. Carries out duties laid down in Drill Duties—Indirect Fire, which include ordering "For Indirect Fire—Mount Gun," and paralleling guns.
(In Post method, parallels guns himself.)
7. Checks crest clearance.
8. Supervises generally the duties in the gun line, and forms the link between Pl. C. and gun line.
9. When orderlies report to him, sends one to Pl. H.Q. and keeps one himself.

In Action.

10. Is responsible for :—
 - (a) Seeing S.Cs., acknowledge all orders.
 - (b) Signalling for limbers when required.
 - (c) Reporting S.A.A. state to Pl. C.
11. Must be prepared to carry out any of the Pl. C's. duties.

DUTIES OF A SECTION COMMANDER IN THE ATTACK.

DIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Commands section.
- *2. If detailed to move limbers by another route, accompanies them with orders as to :—
 - (a) Route.
 - (b) Time to start.
 - (c) Place of movement.
 - (d) Rendezvous (pointed out if possible).
3. Commands section in the move forward to rendezvous.
(When Pl. C. signals for all N.C.Os., receives situation briefly, and is sent forward to a central rendezvous with Pl. Sjt., Pl. H.Q., other S.C., orderlies and R.Ts.).
4. Meets Pl. C. at this position and receives in detail :—Information, intention and method, and moves forward with R.Ts. and orderlies to allotted area.

Occupation.

5. On arrival there, he gives following orders to R.T. :—
 - (a) 1st target.
 - (b) Arc of fire.
 - (c) Points to which he requires ranges.
 - (d) Controlling position.
6. He then selects :—
 - (a) Section position in his area.
 - (b) His control position.
 - (c) A gun position for each gun.
 - (d) Reference points.
7. Three alternative methods of bringing guns into action are :—
 - (a) Using sect. orderly to mark out gun position and marking other himself.
 - (b) Signalling guns up in turn, pointing out to each No. 1 as he arrives the gun position, 1st target, arc of fire and R.Ps.
 - (c) Going back and bringing forward Nos. 1 with tripods as far as cover allows and pointing out gun positions, etc., as in (b) above.
8. Sends orderly to Pl. H.Q.
9. When guns are ready, gives fire order, and opens fire according to Pl. C's. orders.

In Action.

10. Is responsible for :—
 - (a) Control of fire.
 - (b) Carrying out F.D.Os.
 - (c) Locating and engaging targets within arc.
 - (d) Solving safety problems as they arise
 - (e) Making arrangements to continue firing in case observation is at any time interrupted.

*N.B.—Para. 2 does not apply to the junior S.C.

INDIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Same as direct fire.
- *2. Same.
3. Same.

(When Pl. C. signals for all N.C.Os., receives situation briefly, line of advance, and method of indirect fire, S.A.A. required, and instructions to move the Pl. to the position in readiness.)

Occupation.

- *4. On arrival there, orders, "For Indirect Fire—Prepare for Action," and amount of S.A.A. to be taken out of limber, and, if above normal, details loads to higher numbers.
- *5. Gains touch with the Pl. Sjt. at the gun line.
- *6. Moves platoon forward to a position in rear of gun position.
7. Carries out duties as laid down in Drill Duties—Indirect Fire, which includes :—When signalled for by Pl. Sjt., doubling forward and placing himself on the spot for his flank gun.
8. On order "For Indirect Fire—Mount Guns," supervises mounting of both guns (staggered if necessary), and places himself in rear and slightly to the left of his left subsection, and carries out his duties for indirect fire.
9. Reports if unable to clear crest.

In Action.

10. Is responsible for :—
 - (a) Seeing that all orders are acknowledged and carried out by the gun numbers.
 - (b) Various instruments and dials being correctly adjusted.
 - (c) The maintenance of both guns.
11. When firing is carried out by chart, he takes charge of one of his guns and interprets into orders the fire control chart of that gun.
12. Must be prepared to carry out any of the Pl. Sjt's. duties.

*N.B.—Paras. 2, 4, 5 and 6 do not apply to the junior S.C.

DUTIES OF A SECTION CORPORAL IN THE ATTACK.

DIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Acts as 2nd-in-command to his section.
2. (When Pl. C. signals for all N.C.O.s., receives situation briefly, position in readiness for his section, and route to it, S.A.A. required and position for limbers after unloading.)

Occupation.

3. Moves his section to the position in readiness.
4. On arrival there, orders, "Prepare for action."
5. Details S.A.A. required and numbers to carry S.A.A. above normal.
6. Sends R.T. and orderly forward to S.C.
7. Gives limber driver a definite point to return to, when signalled for, and sends limber to covered position.
8. Keeps touch with S.C. and on receiving indication of the Sect. position from movements of S.C., orders guns and equipment forward as ground permits.
9. Marches spare numbers to limber position.
10. Reports S.A.A. state to Pl. C.

In Action.

11. Is responsible for :—

- (a) Supply from limbers to guns.
- (b) Maintaining touch between them.

INDIRECT FIRE.

Prior to and during the Move Forward.

1. Same as direct fire.
2. (When Pl. C. signals for all N.C.O.s., receives situation briefly, line of advance, method of indirect fire, S.A.A. required.)

Occupation.

3. Assists the S.C. at "For Indirect Fire—Prepare for Action."
- *4. Sends 2 sect. orderlies and 1 R.T. forward to Pl. Sjt.
- *5. Moves limber to covered position.
- *6. Organizes chain of supply in rear, making use of junior S. Cpl. as necessary.

In Action.

7. Is responsible for :—
Supply from limbers to guns.
8. When firing is carried out by chart, he takes charge of one of his guns and interprets into orders the fire control chart of that gun.
9. Must be prepared to command his section if the S.C. is commanding the gun line.

*N.B.—The senior S. Cpl. carries out these duties, but the junior S. Cpl. sometimes assists him.

DUTIES OF A PLATOON COMMANDER FOR OCCUPATION BY NIGHT WHEN PRELIMINARY RECONNAISSANCE CAN BE CARRIED OUT BY DAYLIGHT.

Prior to Occupation.

1. He will take, with a R.T. and orderly, director and pegs for reconnaissance. If possible, S.Cs. should go forward to view ground by daylight, in which case orderly may not be required.
2. Chooses exact position for platoon.
3. Instructs R.T. to take necessary ranges, puts in gun peg and direction peg for each gun, aligned onto a target or fixed line.
4. When more than one target occurs, pegs will be aligned on zero line.
5. Measures angles of sight and switches.
6. Notes magnetic bearing of zero line.
7. Selects positions in readiness for sections, and points them out to S.Cs.
8. If sections are too widely separated for the S.Cs. to be present, he also chooses a forward rendezvous.

Occupation.

9. If S.Cs. were not present during the reconnaissance, Pl. C. leads platoon to forward rendezvous or one of positions in readiness. Otherwise, this is done by S.Cs. direct.
10. He will take forward each S.C. in turn, and show him his position in readiness, gun and direction pegs.

DUTIES OF A PLATOON COMMANDER WHEN NO DAYLIGHT RECONNAISSANCE IS POSSIBLE.

N.B.—It is possible to arrange for fixed lines fairly accurately at close ranges provided a light can be shown in the place where the fire is to fall.

1. Choose positions for sections either off map or by personal reconnaissance.
2. Proceeds with torch to place where fire is needed, and exposes light towards guns.
(R.Ts. take range to light, and Nos. 1 lay for direction with day sights. Angle of sight is taken with director. Elevation put on gun with clinometer.)
4. On completion a light signal may be fired from gun position.

DUTIES OF A PLATOON COMMANDER WHEN FACED WITH AN IMMEDIATE OVERHEAD PROBLEM.

1. Makes rough reconnaissance for probable positions, including direct or indirect, and decides on most favourable for safety as regards O.T.
2. Returns to the platoon or sends message.
3. Gives orders to reconnaissance party to go forward to the rendezvous near proposed position. (One R.T., observer, orderly and batman-groom.)
4. Gives Pl. Sjt. situation briefly and orders him to move the platoon to a forward rendezvous.
5. Returns to the rendezvous to which he has sent his reconnaissance party, and gives orders as follows :—
 - (a) To R.T. : Obtain range to target and O.T.
 - (b) To Observer : To watch the enemy and O.T.
6. When the R.T. has obtained the necessary ranges, the Pl. C. will solve the overhead problem from that part of the probable position which is least favourable.
7. When firing direct, instructs the R.T. to rejoin his section.
8. If it is safe to fire, he will carry out the necessary detailed reconnaissance for the occupation of the position, and issues orders for its occupation in the natural manner.

DUTIES SPECIAL TO REAR GUARD ACTION.

In Action.

- Pl. C.—1. Reconnoitres line of retirement and next position (or gets Pl. Sjt. to).
2. Issues verbally, or by orderly, following orders :—
 - (a) Line of retirement.
 - (b) Next task or rendezvous.
 - (c) How he intends to signal the withdrawal.
 - (d) How Pl. H.Q. are to withdraw.
3. May be able to decide :—
 - (a) Order of withdrawal or method, and how to keep in touch.

The Withdrawal.

- Pl. C.—1. If withdrawal to be normal, orders "Cease Firing—On Limber," and details next task or rendezvous.
2. Otherwise orders "Prepare to move mounted," then "Move."
3. Is the last to leave the position.

Prepare to Move Mounted.

- S.C.—1. Signals for limber, and sends back R.T. or Orderly.
2. Informs S. Cpl. of amount of S.A.A. to be left with guns, and gives final orders.
- S. Cpl.—1. Orders limber up, turns it round, and takes off cover.
2. Orders gun chests off and amt. of S.A.A. to go up to guns.
3. Marches all except Nos. 1 and 2, orderly and R.T. to rendezvous.
4. Details fresh Nos. 1 and 2 for when guns arrive back.

Move.

- S.C.—1. Assists in everything being packed up and then all mount on limber and return to next rendezvous.

DUTIES SPECIAL TO DEFENCE.

On Decision to Occupy Position.

- Pl. C.—1. Gives orders first to section with least distance to move.
2. Orders must include :—
 - (a) Position of O.T., near section areas and arcs of fire.
 - (b) Details of fixed line and rates of fire.
 - (c) S.O.S. signal, where it will be put up, and action to be taken.
 - (d) Orders for local protection, concealment and digging.
 - (e) Alternative positions.
 - (f) Where limbers are to be sent.
 - (g) Communications.
3. Normally gives arcs only first and fixed lines later.
4. Orders Pl. Sjt. to get in touch with rifle units, to arrange for protection, liaison and safety problems.

- S.C.—1. Orders R.T. to make full range card, so that he can be dispensed with.

Occupation.

- Pl. C.—1. Arranges with rifle units for fixed lines ensuring that all troops are safe for flanking or overhead fire.
2. Details fixed lines.
3. Reports when finished to Coy. H.Q.
- S.C.—1. Gets guns on to fixed line as soon as poss. and half loads.
2. Posts sentries and look-outs.
3. Arranges for local protection, concealment and digging parties.
4. Gives particulars about S.O.S. signal, and to S.C. about limbers.
5. Points out to N.C.O.s. and men arcs of fire, R.Ps., position of O.T. and near ranges.
6. Sends orderly to Pl. H.Q. to report sect. in position and to remain there.
7. Chooses alarm post, informs all of its position, signal for occupation, and action to be taken.
8. Gives all ranks all information, and makes out duty roster for day and night.
9. Gains touch with rifle coys. nearby and finds out about patrols.

- S. Cpl.—1. Orders gun chests, all S.A.A., spare parts box, spare oil, indirect fire and night-firing stores, signal pistol and tools, to be unloaded from limber and placed in positions near guns.
2. Sends limber to rear position.
3. Reconnoitres for spare water for guns and informs S.C. where it is.

Supporting Guns.

Orders same as for forward guns. Commanders must get in touch with rifle units. If ordered to cover foremost localities, must keep guns laid on them.

Reserve Guns.

Commanders must get in touch with rifle units, and reconnoitre for positions to protect reserve localities.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

P G.	...	...	...	Machine Gun.
Pl. C.	...	...	...	Platoon Commander.
Pl.	...	...	...	Platoon.
Pl. Sjt.	...	...	...	Platoon Serjeant.
S.C.	...	...	...	Section Commander.
S. Cpl.	...	...	...	Section Corporal.
R.T.	...	...	...	Range Taker.
F.D.O.	...	...	...	Fire Direction Order.
O.P.	...	...	...	Observation Post
O.T.	Own Troops.
R.P.	Reference Point.
S.A.A.	Small Arms Ammunition
Sect.	Section.
Coy.	Company.



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